



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Northwest Region  
7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Bldg. 1  
Seattle, WA 98115

Refer to:  
2003/00507

January 19, 2004

Mr. Lawrence C. Evans  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Attn: John Barco  
Portland District, CENWP-CO-GP  
P.O. Box 2946  
Portland, OR 97208-2946

Re: Endangered Species Act Section 7 Formal Consultation and Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Essential Fish Habitat Consultation for the Willamette Falls Construction Project by Portland General Electric, Willamette River Mile 26.7, Clackamas County, Oregon (Corps No. 200300142)

Dear Mr. Evans:

Enclosed is a biological opinion (Opinion) prepared by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) on the issuance of permits under section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and section 404 of the Clean Water Act for the Willamette Falls Construction Project by Portland General Electric at Willamette River Mile 26.7, Clackamas County, Oregon. The Corps of Engineers (COE) determined that the action may adversely affect Upper Willamette River chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) and Upper Willamette River steelhead (*O. mykiss*) and requested formal consultation on this action. NOAA Fisheries concludes in this Opinion that the proposed action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the above listed species or destroy or adversely modify designated critical habitat.

Pursuant to section 7 of the ESA, NOAA Fisheries has included reasonable and prudent measures with non-discretionary terms and conditions that NOAA Fisheries believes are necessary and appropriate to minimize the potential for incidental take associated with this project.

This document also serves as consultation on essential fish habitat (EFH) pursuant to section 305(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) and its implementing regulations (50 CFR Part 600). NOAA Fisheries concludes that the proposed action will adversely affect designated EFH for coho salmon and chinook salmon. As required by section 305(b)(4)(A) of the MSA, included are conservation recommendations that NOAA



Fisheries believes will avoid, minimize, mitigate, or otherwise offset adverse effects on EFH resulting from the proposed action. As described in the enclosed consultation, 305(b)(4)(B) of the MSA requires that a Federal action agency must provide a detailed response in writing within 30 days after receiving an EFH conservation recommendation.

Questions regarding this letter should be directed to Christy Fellas of my staff in the Willamette Basin Habitat Branch of the Oregon State Habitat Office at 503.231.2307.

Sincerely,

*f.1 Michael R Crouse*

D. Robert Lohn  
Regional Administrator

## Biological Opinion

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# Essential Fish Habitat Consultation

Willamette Falls Construction Project  
by Portland General Electric,  
Willamette River Mile 26.7, Clackamas County, Oregon  
(Corps No. 200300142)

Agency: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Consultation  
Conducted By: NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service,  
Northwest Region

Date Issued: January 19, 2004

Issued by: *f. Michael R Course*  
D. Robert Lohn  
Regional Administrator

**Refer to:** **2003/00507**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

On May 5, 2003, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) received a letter from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) requesting formal consultation pursuant to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) for the issuance of a permit under section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and section 404 of the Clean Water Act to Portland General Electric to allow the repair of existing trash racks and replacement of the intake headwall gates at Willamette Falls, Willamette River, Clackamas County, Oregon. The COE determined the proposed action was likely to adversely affect the following ESA-listed species: Upper Willamette River (UWR) chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) and UWR steelhead (*O. mykiss*). NOAA Fisheries requested additional information about the details of the construction methods and monitoring plans in a letter dated June 2, 2003. The COE responded with additional information in a letter received by NOAA Fisheries on July 14, 2003.

NOAA Fisheries listed UWR steelhead and chinook salmon under the ESA as threatened on March 24, 1999 (64 FR 14517). Protective regulations for steelhead and chinook were designated on July 10, 2000 (65 FR 42422). The objective of this Opinion is to determine whether the proposed action is likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the ESA listed species for these species. This consultation is conducted pursuant to section 7(a)(2) of the ESA and its implementing regulations, 50 CFR 402.

### **1.2 Proposed Action**

The purpose of the proposed project is make necessary repairs needed to implement a multi-year sequence of projects designed to help increase the survival of migrating salmonids through and around PGE's hydroelectric project at Willamette Falls.

#### Construction

The proposed project involves the construction of a temporary cofferdam to allow inspection, maintenance and repair to the existing trash racks and replacement of the existing intake headwall gates. All work will occur during the recommended in-water work window of June 1 - October 31.

A permanent concrete sill will be placed beside the outer intake screens. This sill will anchor a reusable cofferdam system that will allow dewatering of the forebay to allow repairs to the existing facility. During construction, flow through the powerhouse will be stopped to create slack water in the work area.

Divers will install the sill using an underwater concrete containment system. Containment bags made of clear visquine or milar will be attached to each 10-foot section of sill form. Once concrete placement is complete, the diver will extract the discharge hose and tie the containment bag closed. Any spillage that occurs during placement will be contained within the plastic bag.

The bags will be removed once the concrete is set and the cofferdam sills are ready for installation of the sheetpile sections. A total of 40 cubic yards will be poured. After all concrete cures for 30 days, the sheetpile support frame and cofferdam sheetpiles will be installed. Once installed, the forebay will be dewatered between the cofferdam and the powerhouse intakes.

The water pumped from inside the cofferdam will be directed back into the river or the lock canal. Pumping will be maintained throughout construction to handle any seepage. The pump system will include a redundant automatic backup to prevent flooding should a leak develop.

The following best management practices are included in the proposed project:

- A spill boom kit will be on hand in case any equipment has a leak or fuel spill.
- Staging areas will be on existing paved surfaces beside the dam.
- Site inspection will occur on a daily basis by a PGE inspector and on an as needed basis by the design engineer and project manager.
- An anti-washout admixture will be used to limit the risk of river currents sweeping cement particles away from the project area.
- Concrete pours will be limited to 10 cubic yards at a time and will be monitored from the surface via video monitor.
- During the concrete pours, pH will be monitored. If background levels are exceeded within 100 feet downstream, work will be stopped until natural dilution dissipates the concentrations back to background.
- In the event of a failure, the concrete pump will be deactivated immediately.
- If listed fish species are present in the work area, concrete placement operations will be suspended until the fish leave the area.

#### Fish Salvage

Once dewatering begins, a PGE fish biologist will be present to salvage any fish left stranded. Any stranded fish will be dip netted and placed in an aerated fish holding tank at the powerhouse. All species will be salvaged and no more than five adult fish and 300 juvenile fish will be held in any of the three compartments at any given time.

PGE does not expect any fish to be stranded behind the cofferdam that cannot be accessed for salvage. In the unlikely event this occurs, an effort will be made to have river water available to maintain wetted conditions as needed. This salvage plan is based on PGE's prior experience at the Willamette Falls facility.

## 2. ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

### 2.1 Biological Opinion

#### 2.1.1 Biological Information

The action area is defined by NOAA Fisheries regulations (50 CFR 402) as “all areas to be affected directly or indirectly by the Federal action and not merely the immediate area involved in the action.” The action area is the Willamette River including the streambed, streambank and water column at river mile 26.7 and 200 feet upstream and 200 feet downstream of the construction area.

Essential habitat features for salmonids are: Substrate, water quality, water quantity, water temperature, water velocity, cover/shelter, food (juvenile only), riparian vegetation, space, and safe passage conditions. The proposed action may affect the essential habitat features of water quality and space. The Willamette River within the action area serves as a rearing and migration area for listed salmonids.

The listing status and biological information for UWR steelhead is provided in Busby *et al.* (1996). Listing status and biological information for UWR chinook salmon is described in Myers *et al.* (1998). An updated status review of each of these ESUs is provided in a draft document titled “Preliminary conclusions regarding the updated status of listed ESUs of West Coast salmon and steelhead,” drafted by the West Coast Salmon Biological Review Team (BRT) (NOAA Fisheries 2003).

The Willamette River in the area of the proposed action serves as a migration area for both adult and juvenile UWR steelhead and UWR chinook salmon. It may also serve as a feeding and rearing area juvenile steelhead and chinook salmon. Essential habitat features for salmonids are: Substrate, water quality, water quantity, water temperature, water velocity, cover/shelter, food (juvenile only), riparian vegetation, space, and safe passage conditions. The proposed action may affect the essential habitat features of cover/shelter, safe passage and water quality as it pertains to rearing and migration of juveniles.

#### Upper Willamette River Chinook

All spring chinook in this evolutionarily significant unit (ESU), except those entering the Clackamas River, must pass Willamette Falls. There is no assessment of the ratio of hatchery-origin to natural-origin chinook passing the falls, but the majority of fish are undoubtedly of hatchery origin (natural-origin fish are defined as having had parents that spawned in the wild as opposed to hatchery-origin fish whose parents spawned in a hatchery). Individual populations' status is discussed below. No formal trend analyses were conducted on any of the UWR chinook populations. The two populations with long-time series of abundance (Clackamas and McKenzie) have insufficient information on the fraction of hatchery-origin spawners to permit a meaningful analysis.

An analysis was conducted by Steel and Sheer (2002) to assess the number of stream miles historically and currently available to salmon populations in the Upper Willamette River. Stream miles usable by salmon are determined based on simple gradient cut-offs and on the presence of impassable barriers. This approach will over-estimate the number of usable stream miles, because it does not take into consideration habitat quality (other than gradient). However, the analysis does indicate that for some populations the number of stream habitat miles presently accessible is significantly reduced from the historical condition.

A large number of spring chinook are released in the Upper Willamette River as mitigation for the loss of habitat above Federal hydroprojects. This hatchery production is considered a potential risk because it masks the productivity of natural population, promotes interbreeding of hatchery and natural fish, poses potential genetic risks, and the incidental take from the fishery promoted by the hatchery production can increase adult mortality. Harvest retention is only allowed for hatchery marked fish, but take from hooking mortality and non-compliance is still a potential issue.

#### Upper Willamette River Steelhead

All steelhead in this ESU must pass Willamette Falls. Two groups of winter steelhead currently exist in the Upper Willamette River. The “late-run” winter steelhead exhibit the historical phenotype adapted to passing the seasonal barrier at Willamette Falls. The falls were ladderized and hatchery “early-run” winter steelhead fish were released above the falls. The early-run fish were derived from Columbia Basin steelhead outside the Willamette River and are considered non-native. The release of winter-run hatchery steelhead has been discontinued recently, but some early-run winter steelhead are still returning from the earlier hatchery releases and from whatever natural production of the early-run fish has been established. Non-native, summer run hatchery steelhead are also released into the Upper Willamette River. There are currently no estimates of the absolute total numbers of spawners in the individual populations.

The BRT could not conclusively identify a single population of UWR steelhead that is naturally self-sustaining. All populations are relatively small, with the recent mean abundance of the entire ESU at less than 6,000. Over the period of the available time series, most of the populations are in decline. The recent elimination of the winter-run hatchery production will allow estimation of the natural productivity of the populations in the future, but the available time series are confounded by the presence of hatchery-origin spawners. On a positive note, the counts all indicate an increase in abundance in 2001, likely at least partly as a result of improved marine conditions.

### **2.1.2 Evaluating Proposed Action**

The standards for determining jeopardy are set forth in section 7(a)(2) of the ESA as defined by 50 CFR Part 402. NOAA Fisheries must determine whether the action is likely to jeopardize the listed species and/or whether the action is likely to destroy or adversely modify critical habitat. This analysis involves the initial steps of: (1) Defining the biological requirements and current



status of the listed species; and (2) evaluating the relevance of the environmental baseline to the species' current status.

Subsequently, NOAA Fisheries evaluates whether the action is likely to jeopardize the listed species by determining if the species can be expected to survive with an adequate potential for recovery. In making this determination, NOAA Fisheries must consider the estimated level of mortality attributable to: (1) Collective effects of the proposed or continuing action; (2) the environmental baseline; and (3) any cumulative effects. If NOAA Fisheries finds that the action is likely to jeopardize the listed species, NOAA Fisheries must identify reasonable and prudent alternatives for the action.

NOAA Fisheries also evaluates whether the action, directly or indirectly, is likely to destroy or adversely modify the listed species' critical habitat. NOAA Fisheries must determine whether habitat modifications appreciably diminish the value of critical habitat for both survival and recovery of the listed species. NOAA Fisheries identifies those effects of the action that impair the function of any essential element of critical habitat. NOAA Fisheries then considers whether such impairment appreciably diminishes the habitat's value for the species' survival and recovery. If NOAA Fisheries concludes that the action will adversely modify critical habitat, it must identify any reasonable and prudent alternatives available.

For the proposed action, NOAA Fisheries' jeopardy analysis considers direct or indirect mortality of fish attributable to the action. NOAA Fisheries' analysis considers the extent to which the proposed action impairs the function of essential elements necessary for migration, spawning, and rearing of listed species under the existing environmental baseline.

### **2.1.3 Biological Requirements**

The first step in the methods NOAA Fisheries uses for applying the ESA section 7(a)(2) to listed salmonids is to define the species' biological requirements that are most relevant to each consultation. NOAA Fisheries also considers the current status of the listed species, taking into account population size, trends, distribution and genetic diversity. To assess the current status of the listed species, NOAA Fisheries starts with the determinations made in its decision to list the species for ESA protection and also considers new data available that is relevant to the determination.

The relevant biological requirements are those necessary for the listed species to survive and recover to a naturally-reproducing population level, at which time protection under the ESA would become unnecessary. Adequate population levels must safeguard the genetic diversity of the listed stock, enhance its capacity to adapt to various environmental conditions, and allow it to become self-sustaining in the natural environment.

For this consultation, the biological requirements are improved habitat characteristics that function to support successful rearing and migration. The current status of the listed species, based upon their risk of extinction, has not significantly improved since the species were listed.

#### **2.1.4 Environmental Baseline**

The Willamette River watershed covers a vast area (29,785 square kilometers) bordered on the east and west by the Cascades and the Pacific Coast ranges. It drains from as far south as Cottage Grove and flows north to its confluence with the Columbia River. The Willamette River watershed is the largest river basin in Oregon. It is home to most of the state's population, its largest cities, and many major industries. The watershed also contains some of Oregon's most productive agricultural lands and supports important fishery resources (City of Portland 2001).

The uplands (Coast and Cascade Ranges) receive about 80% of the precipitation falling on the Willamette River basin, and store much of this water as snow. Ecosystem productivity in these upland streams is relatively low, with aquatic insects gleaned much of their diet from material that falls into running water. In larger, slower tributaries, more plant material is produced in the stream itself. The mainstem supports a highly productive algal community that blooms as temperatures rise in the summer. Insects and some vertebrates feed on these plants, and many vertebrates, including salmonids, feed on stream-dwelling insects. Much of the habitat for Willamette River salmonids has been degraded by various land use practices or eliminated by dams. Wild salmonid populations have declined precipitously over the last century in the Willamette River (WRI 1999).

Significant changes have occurred in the watershed since the arrival of Europeans in the 1800s. The watershed was mostly forested land before the arrival of white settlers. Now, about half the basin is still forested. One-third of the basin is used for agriculture, and about 5% is urbanized or is in residential use. The river receives direct inputs from treated municipal wastes and industrial effluents. Nonpoint source input from agricultural, silvicultural, residential, urban and industrial land uses are also significant, especially during rainfall runoff.

#### **2.1.5 Analysis of Effects**

##### **2.1.5.1 Direct Effects of the Proposed Action**

###### Turbidity from Construction

The effects of suspended sediment and turbidity on fish, as reported in the literature, range from beneficial to detrimental. Elevated total suspended solids (TSS) conditions have been reported to enhance cover conditions, reduce piscivorous fish/bird predation rates, and improve survival. Elevated TSS conditions have also been reported to cause physiological stress, reduce growth, and adversely affect survival. Of key importance in considering the detrimental effects of TSS on fish are the frequency and the duration of the exposure, not just the TSS concentration.

Behavioral avoidance of turbid waters may be one of the most important effects of suspended sediments (DeVore *et al.* 1980, Birtwell *et al.* 1984, Scannell 1988). Salmonids have been observed to move laterally and downstream to avoid turbid plumes (Sigler *et al.* 1984, Lloyd 1987, Scannell 1988, Servizi and Martens 1991). Juvenile salmonids avoid streams that are

chronically turbid, such as glacial streams or those disturbed by human activities, unless the fish need to traverse these streams along migration routes (Lloyd, 1987).

Turbidity from working in front of the forebay is expected to be minimal since the channel bottom is comprised of basalt bedrock with little loose sediment.

#### Concrete Pours

Portland cement (consisting of concrete, mortar, and tile grout) can have adverse effects on fish by producing alkaline conditions in streams and rivers. When it dissolves in water it forms calcium hydroxide,  $\text{Ca(OH)}_2$ , a highly alkaline substance, and as a result produces a very high pH (~12 pH units at 25°C) liquid (Fisheries and Oceans, 2003).

When the pH exceeds a neutral value of 7.0, fish may be adversely affected in the following ways: Death, damage to outer surfaces like gills, eyes, and skin, an inability to dispose of metabolic wastes and increased toxicity of other substances due to change in pH (Fisheries and Oceans, 2003). In addition, if fine concrete particles are not contained during the pour, small particles can clog fish gills or smother spaces where eggs are incubating or insects that fish may be feeding on (Fisheries and Oceans, 2003).

The proposed project includes a containment and monitoring system to minimize potential effects on listed salmonids from pouring concrete in the Willamette River.

#### Fish Salvage

The most lethal biological effects of the proposed action on individual listed salmon will likely be caused by the isolation of in-water areas. Although work area isolation is itself a conservation measure intended to reduce the adverse effects of erosion and runoff on the population, any individual fish present in the work isolation area will be captured and released. Capturing and handling fish causes them stress, though they typically recover fairly rapidly from the process and therefore the overall effects of the procedure are generally short-lived (NMFS 2002). The primary contributing factors to stress and death from handling are differences in water temperatures (between the river and wherever the fish are held), dissolved oxygen concentrations, the amount of time that fish are held out of the water, and physical trauma. Stress on salmonids increases rapidly from handling if the water temperature exceeds 18°C or dissolved oxygen is below saturation. These biological effects will be minimized or avoided by the following conservation measure:

- Any listed fish that may be trapped within the isolated work area will be captured and released using methods approved by NOAA Fisheries, including supervision by a fishery biologist experienced with work area isolation and competent to ensure the safe handling of all ESA-listed fish.

Few listed species are expected to be present during the in-water work window. Although there are associated risk to salmonids during the construction of the proposed project, the end result is

designed to help increase the survival of migrating salmonids through and around PGE's hydroelectric project at Willamette Falls.

#### **2.1.5.2 Cumulative Effects**

Cumulative effects are defined in 50 CFR 402.02 as "those effects of future State or private activities, not involving Federal activities, that are reasonably certain to occur within the action area of the Federal action subject to consultation."

NOAA Fisheries is not aware of any specific future non-federal activities within the action area that would cause greater effects to listed species than presently occurs. Between 1990 and 2000, the population of Clackamas County increased by 21.4%.<sup>1</sup> Thus, NOAA Fisheries assumes that future private and state actions will continue within the action area, increasing as population density rises. As the human population in the state continues to grow, demand for actions similar to the subject project likely will continue to increase as well. Each subsequent action may have only a small incremental effect, but taken together they may have a significant effect that would further degrade the watershed's environmental baseline and undermine the improvements in habitat conditions necessary for listed species to survive and recover.

#### **2.1.6 Conclusion**

NOAA Fisheries has determined that, based on the available information, the proposed action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of listed species nor result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat. NOAA Fisheries used the best available scientific and commercial data to analyze the effects of the proposed action on the biological requirements of the species relative to the environmental baseline, together with cumulative effects.

These conclusions are based on the following considerations: (1) The repairs will be made during the recommended in-water work window of June 1- October 31, when the fewest numbers of listed species are likely to be present; (2) any increases in sedimentation and turbidity in the project area will be short-term and minor; (3) best management practices will be followed for all construction activities; (4) concrete will be poured in a containment system and monitored via underwater video cameras and pH readings; and (5) with minimization measures incorporated into the project design, the proposed action is not likely to impair properly functioning habitat, or retard the long-term progress of impaired habitat toward proper functioning condition essential to the long-term survival and recovery at the population or ESU scale.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, State and County Quickfacts, Coos County, Oregon. Available at <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/41/41051.html>

### **2.1.7 Reinitiation of Consultation**

Consultation must be reinitiated if: (1) The amount or extent of taking specified in the incidental take statement is exceeded, or is expected to be exceeded; (2) new information reveals effects of the action may affect listed species in a way not previously considered; (3) the action is modified in a way that causes an effect on listed species that was not previously considered; or (4) a new species is listed or critical habitat is designated that may be affected by the action (50 CFR 402.16).

## **2.2 Incidental Take Statement**

The ESA at section 9 [16 USC 1538] prohibits take of endangered species. The prohibition of take is extended to threatened anadromous salmonids by section 4(d) rule [50 CFR 223.203]. Take is defined by the statute as “to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” [16 USC 1532(19)] Harm is defined by regulation as “an act which actually kills or injures fish or wildlife. Such an act may include significant habitat modification or degradation which actually kills or injures fish or wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavior patterns, including, breeding, spawning, rearing, migrating, feeding or sheltering.” [50 CFR 222.102] Harass is defined as “an intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavior patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.” [50 CFR 17.3] Incidental take is defined as “takings that result from, but are not the purpose of, carrying out an otherwise lawful activity conducted by the Federal agency or applicant.” [50 CFR 402.02] The ESA at section 7(o)(2) removes the prohibition from any incidental taking that is in compliance with the terms and conditions specified in a section 7(b)(4) incidental take statement [16 USC 1536].

An incidental take statement specifies the impact of any incidental taking of listed species. It also provides reasonable and prudent measures that are necessary to minimize the effects of take and sets forth non-discretionary terms and conditions with which the action agency must comply to implement the reasonable and prudent measures.

### **2.2.1 Amount or Extent of the Take**

NOAA Fisheries anticipates that the actions covered by this Opinion are reasonably certain to result in incidental take of listed species because of potential adverse effects from decreased water quality and salvage and handling of individuals. NOAA Fisheries anticipates that up to 50 individual UWR chinook salmon and up to 50 individual UWR steelhead may be injured or killed by this salvage and handling process. Even though NOAA Fisheries expects some low level of incidental take to occur due to harassment and harm (habitat alteration) caused by the actions covered by this Opinion, the best scientific and commercial data available are not sufficient to enable NOAA Fisheries to estimate a specific amount of incidental take to the species itself. In instances such as these, NOAA Fisheries designates the expected amount of take as “unquantifiable.” Based on the information provided by the COE and other available

information, NOAA Fisheries anticipates that an unquantifiable amount of incidental take could occur as a result of the action covered by this Opinion.

The extent of the take is limited to disturbance resulting from construction activities within the action area. The action area is the Willamette River including the streambed, streambank, water column at River Mile 26.7 and 200 feet upstream and 200 feet downstream of the construction area.

### **2.2.2 Reasonable and Prudent Measures**

The measures described below are non-discretionary. They must be implemented so that they become binding conditions in order for the exemption in section 7(a)(2) to apply. The COE has the continuing duty to regulate the activities covered in this incidental take statement. If the COE fails to adhere to the terms and conditions of the incidental take statement through enforceable terms added to the document authorizing this action, or fails to retain the oversight to ensure compliance with these terms and conditions, the protective coverage of section 7(a)(2) may lapse.

NOAA Fisheries believes that the following reasonable and prudent measures are necessary and appropriate to avoid or minimize take of listed salmonid species resulting from the action covered by this Opinion.

The COE shall include measures that will:

1. Minimize incidental take from general construction by excluding unauthorized permit actions and applying permit conditions that avoid or minimize adverse effects to riparian and aquatic systems.
2. Complete a comprehensive monitoring and reporting program to ensure implementation of these conservation measures are effective at minimizing the likelihood of take from permitted activities.

### **2.2.3 Terms and Conditions**

To be exempt from the prohibitions of section 9 of the ESA, the COE must comply with the following terms and conditions, which implement the reasonable and prudent measures described above for each category of activity.

1. To implement reasonable and prudent measure #1 (general conditions for construction, operation and maintenance), the COE shall ensure that:

- a. Timing of in-water work. Work below the bankfull elevation<sup>2</sup> will be completed during the preferred in-water work period of June 1 - October 31 and/or December 1 - January 31, unless otherwise approved in writing by NOAA Fisheries.
- b. Cessation of work. Cease project operations under high flow conditions that may result in inundation of the project area, except for efforts to avoid or minimize resource damage.
- c. Pollution and Erosion Control Plan. Prepare and carry out a pollution and erosion control plan to prevent pollution caused by surveying or construction operations. The plan must be available for inspection on request by COE or NOAA Fisheries.
  - i. Plan Contents. The pollution and erosion control plan will contain the pertinent elements listed below, and meet requirements of all applicable laws and regulations.
    - (1) The name and address of the party(s) responsible for accomplishment of the pollution and erosion control plan.
    - (2) Practices to prevent erosion and sedimentation associated with construction sites, equipment and material storage sites, fueling operations, and staging areas.
    - (3) Practices to confine, remove and dispose of excess concrete, cement, grout, and other mortars or bonding agents, including measures for washout facilities.
    - (4) A description of any regulated or hazardous products or materials that will be used for the project, including procedures for inventory, storage, handling, and monitoring.
    - (5) A spill containment and control plan with notification procedures, specific cleanup and disposal instructions for different products, quick response containment and cleanup measures that will be available on the site, proposed methods for disposal of spilled materials, and employee training for spill containment.
    - (6) Practices to prevent construction debris from dropping into any stream or waterbody, and to remove any material that does drop with a minimum disturbance to the streambed and water quality.
  - ii. Inspection of erosion controls. During construction, monitor instream turbidity and inspect all erosion controls daily during the rainy season and weekly during the dry season, or more often as necessary, to ensure the erosion controls are working adequately.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> 'Bankfull elevation' means the bank height inundated by a 1.5 to 2-year average recurrence interval and may be estimated by morphological features such as average bank height, scour lines and vegetation limits.

<sup>3</sup> 'Working adequately' means that project activities do not increase ambient stream turbidity by more than 10% above background 100 feet below the discharge, when measured relative to a control point immediately upstream of the turbidity causing activity.

- (1) If monitoring or inspection shows that the erosion controls are ineffective, mobilize work crews immediately to make repairs, install replacements, or install additional controls as necessary.
  - (2) Remove sediment from erosion controls once it has reached 1/3 of the exposed height of the control.
- d. Construction discharge water. Treat all discharge water created by construction (e.g., concrete washout, pumping for work area isolation, vehicle wash water, drilling fluids) as follows.
  - i. Water quality. Design, build and maintain facilities to collect and treat all construction discharge water using the best available technology applicable to site conditions. Provide treatment to remove debris, nutrients, sediment, petroleum hydrocarbons, metals and other pollutants likely to be present.
  - ii. Discharge velocity. If construction discharge water is released using an outfall or diffuser port, velocities may not exceed 4 feet per second, and the maximum size of any aperture may not exceed one inch.
  - iii. Pollutants. Do not allow pollutants including green concrete, contaminated water, silt, welding slag, sandblasting abrasive, or grout cured less than 24 hours to contact any wetland or the two-year floodplain.
- e. Preconstruction activity. Complete the following actions before significant<sup>4</sup> alteration of the project area.
  - i. Marking. Flag the boundaries of clearing limits associated with site access and construction to prevent ground disturbance of critical riparian vegetation, wetlands and other sensitive sites beyond the flagged boundary.
  - ii. Emergency erosion controls. Ensure that the following materials for emergency erosion control are onsite.
    - (1) A supply of sediment control materials (e.g., silt fence, straw bales<sup>5</sup>).
    - (2) An oil-absorbing, floating boom whenever surface water is present.
  - iii. Temporary erosion controls. All temporary erosion controls will be in-place and appropriately installed downslope of project activity within the riparian area until site restoration is complete.
- f. Heavy Equipment. Restrict use of heavy equipment as follows:
  - i. Choice of equipment. When heavy equipment will be used, the equipment selected will have the least adverse effects on the environment (e.g., minimally-sized, low ground pressure equipment).
  - ii. Vehicle and material staging. Store construction materials, and fuel, operate, maintain and store vehicles as follows:

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<sup>4</sup> 'Significant' means an effect can be meaningfully measured, detected or evaluated.

<sup>5</sup> When available, certified weed-free straw or hay bales will be used to prevent introduction of noxious weeds.



- (1) To reduce the staging area and potential for contamination, ensure that only enough supplies and equipment to complete a specific job will be stored on-site.
  - (2) Complete vehicle staging, cleaning, maintenance, refueling, and fuel storage in a vehicle staging area placed 150 feet or more from any stream, waterbody or wetland, unless otherwise approved in writing by NOAA Fisheries.
  - (3) Inspect all vehicles operated within 150 feet of any stream, waterbody or wetland daily for fluid leaks before leaving the vehicle staging area. Repair any leaks detected in the vehicle staging area before the vehicle resumes operation. Document inspections in a record that is available for review on request by Corps or NOAA Fisheries.
  - (4) Before operations begin and as often as necessary during operation, steam clean all equipment that will be used below bankfull elevation until all visible external oil, grease, mud, and other visible contaminants are removed.
  - (5) Diaper all stationary power equipment (*e.g.*, generators, cranes, stationary drilling equipment) operated within 150 feet of any stream, waterbody or wetland to prevent leaks, unless suitable containment is provided to prevent potential spills from entering any stream or waterbody.
- g. Site preparation. Conserve native materials for site restoration.
- i. If possible, leave native materials where they are found.
  - ii. If materials are moved, damaged or destroyed, replace them with a functional equivalent during site restoration.
  - iii. Stockpile any large wood,<sup>6</sup> native vegetation, weed-free topsoil, and native channel material displaced by construction for use during site restoration.
- h. Earthwork. Complete earthwork (including drilling, excavation, dredging, filling and compacting) as quickly as possible.
- i. Site stabilization. Stabilize all disturbed areas, including obliteration of temporary roads, following any break in work unless construction will resume within four days.
  - ii. Source of materials. Obtain boulders, rock, woody materials and other natural construction materials used for the project outside the riparian area.

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<sup>6</sup> For purposes of this Opinion only, 'large wood' means a tree, log, or rootwad big enough to dissipate stream energy associated with high flows, capture bedload, stabilize streambanks, influence channel characteristics, and otherwise support aquatic habitat function, given the slope and bankfull channel width of the stream in which the wood occurs. See, Oregon Department of Forestry and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, *A Guide to Placing Large Wood in Streams*, May 1995 ([www.odf.state.or.us/FP/RefLibrary/LargeWoodPlacemntGuide5-95.doc](http://www.odf.state.or.us/FP/RefLibrary/LargeWoodPlacemntGuide5-95.doc)).

2. To implement reasonable and prudent measure #2 (monitoring), the Corps shall:
- a. Implementation monitoring. A monitoring report shall be submitted within 120 days of project completion describing the applicant's success meeting his or her permit conditions. Each project level monitoring report will include the following information:
    - i. Project identification
      - (1) Applicant name, permit number, and project name.
      - (2) Corps contact person.
      - (3) Starting and ending dates for work completed.
    - ii. Photo documentation. Photos of habitat conditions at the project and any compensation site(s), before, during, and after project completion.<sup>7</sup>
      - (1) Include general views and close-ups showing details of the project and project area, including pre- and post- construction.
      - (2) Label each photo with date, time, project name, photographer's name, and a comment about the subject.
    - iii. Other data.
      - (1) Pollution control. A summary of pollution and erosion control inspections, including any erosion control failure, contaminant release, and correction effort.
      - (2) Underwater video and pH monitoring. The following project specific monitoring will be included in the monitoring report:
        - (a) A copy of the underwater video taken during installation of the concrete footing for the cofferdam.
        - (b) Report detailing pH readings taken during concrete pours.
  - b. NOTICE. If a sick, injured or dead specimen of a threatened or endangered species is found, the finder must notify the Vancouver Field Office of NOAA Fisheries Law Enforcement at 360.418.4246. The finder must take care in handling of sick or injured specimens to ensure effective treatment, and in handling dead specimens to preserve biological material in the best possible condition for later analysis of cause of death. The finder also has the responsibility to carry out instructions provided by Law Enforcement to ensure that evidence intrinsic to the specimen is not disturbed unnecessarily.

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<sup>7</sup> Relevant habitat conditions may include characteristics of channels, eroding and stable streambanks in the project area, riparian vegetation, water quality, flows at base, bankfull and over-bankfull stages, and other visually discernable environmental conditions at the project area, and upstream and downstream of the project.

### 3. MAGNUSON-STEVENSON ACT

#### 3.1 Background

The MSA, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-267), established procedures designed to identify, conserve, and enhance essential fish habitat (EFH) for those species regulated under a Federal fisheries management plan. Pursuant to the MSA:

- Federal agencies must consult with NOAA Fisheries on all actions, or proposed actions, authorized, funded, or undertaken by the agency, that may adversely affect EFH (§305(b)(2)).
- NOAA Fisheries must provide conservation recommendations for any Federal or state action that would adversely affect EFH (§305(b)(4)(A)).
- Federal agencies must provide a detailed response in writing to NOAA Fisheries within 30 days after receiving EFH conservation recommendations. The response must include a description of measures proposed by the agency for avoiding, mitigating, or offsetting the impact of the activity on EFH. In the case of a response that is inconsistent with NOAA Fisheries EFH conservation recommendations, the Federal agency must explain its reasons for not following the recommendations (§305(b)(4)(B)).

EFH means those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity (MSA §3). For the purpose of interpreting this definition of EFH: “Waters” include aquatic areas and their associated physical, chemical, and biological properties that are used by fish and may include aquatic areas historically used by fish where appropriate; “substrate” includes sediment, hard bottom, structures underlying the waters, and associated biological communities; “necessary” means the habitat required to support a sustainable fishery and the managed species’ contribution to a healthy ecosystem; “spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity” covers a species’ full life cycle (50 CFR 600.10), and “adverse effect” means any impact which reduces quality and/or quantity of EFH, and may include direct (*e.g.*, contamination or physical disruption), indirect (*e.g.*, loss of prey or reduction in species fecundity), site-specific or habitat-wide impacts, including individual, cumulative, or synergistic consequences of actions (50 CFR 600.810).

EFH consultation with NOAA Fisheries is required regarding any Federal agency action that may adversely affect EFH, including actions that occur outside EFH, such as certain upstream and upslope activities.

The objectives of this EFH consultation are to determine whether the proposed action would adversely affect designated EFH and to recommend conservation measures to avoid, minimize, or otherwise offset potential adverse effects to EFH.

### **3.2 Identification of EFH**

Pursuant to the MSA, the Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) has designated EFH for federally-managed fisheries within the waters of Washington, Oregon, and California. Designated EFH for groundfish and coastal pelagic species encompasses all waters from the mean high water line and upriver extent of saltwater intrusion in river mouths, along the coasts of Washington, Oregon and California, seaward to the boundary of the U.S. exclusive economic zone (370.4 km) (PFMC 1998a, 1998b). Freshwater EFH for Pacific salmon includes all those streams, lakes, ponds, wetlands, and other waterbodies currently, or historically accessible to salmon in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and California, except areas upstream of certain impassable man-made barriers (as identified by the PFMC 1999), and longstanding, naturally-impassable barriers (*i.e.*, natural waterfalls in existence for several hundred years) (PFMC 1999). In estuarine and marine areas, designated salmon EFH extends from the nearshore and tidal submerged environments within state territorial waters out to the full extent of the exclusive economic zone (370.4 km) offshore of Washington, Oregon, and California north of Point Conception to the Canadian border (PFMC 1999).

Detailed descriptions and identifications of EFH are contained in the fishery management plans for groundfish (PFMC 1998a), coastal pelagic species (PFMC 1998b), and Pacific salmon (PFMC 1999). Casillas *et al.* (1998) provides additional detail on the groundfish EFH habitat complexes. Assessment of the potential adverse effects to these species' EFH from the proposed action is based, in part, on these descriptions and on information provided by the COE.

### **3.3 Proposed Actions**

The proposed action and action area are detailed above in sections 1.2 and 2.1.1 of this Opinion. The action area includes habitats that have been designated as EFH for various life-history stages of chinook and coho salmon.

### **3.4 Effects of Proposed Action**

As described in detail in section 2.1.5 of this document, the proposed action will result in short-term adverse effects to a variety of habitat parameters. NOAA Fisheries believes that the proposed action will cause a minor, short-term degradation of anadromous salmonid habitat due to increases in turbidity and sound effects from pile driving. Effects of over-water structures will be minimized by incorporating translucent material and grating into the dock and covered moorage design.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

NOAA Fisheries concludes that the proposed action will adversely affect the EFH for chinook and coho salmon.

### **3.6 EFH Conservation Recommendations**

Pursuant to section 305(b)(4)(A) of the MSA, NOAA Fisheries is required to provide EFH conservation recommendations to Federal agencies regarding actions which may adversely affect EFH. While NOAA Fisheries understands that the conservation measures described in the BA will be implemented by the COE it does not believe that these measures are sufficient to address the adverse impacts to EFH described above. However, the terms and conditions outlined in section 2.2.3 are generally applicable to designated EFH for the species designated in section 3.3, and address these adverse effects. Consequently, NOAA Fisheries incorporates them here as EFH conservation recommendations.

### **3.7 Statutory Response Requirement**

Pursuant to the MSA (§305(b)(4)(B)) and 50 CFR 600.920(j), Federal agencies are required to provide a detailed written response to NOAA Fisheries' EFH conservation recommendations within 30 days of receipt of these recommendations. The response must include a description of measures proposed to avoid, mitigate, or offset the adverse impacts of the activity on EFH. In the case of a response that is inconsistent with the EFH conservation recommendations, the response must explain the reasons for not following the recommendations, including the scientific justification for any disagreements over the anticipated effects of the proposed action and the measures needed to avoid, minimize, mitigate, or offset such effects.

### **3.8 Supplemental Consultation**

The COE must reinitiate EFH consultation with NOAA Fisheries if the proposed action is substantially revised in a manner that may adversely affect EFH, or if new information becomes available that affects the basis for NOAA Fisheries' EFH conservation recommendations (50 CFR 600.920(k)).

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**Table 1.** References for Additional Background on Listing Status, Biological Information, Protective Regulations, and Critical Habitat Elements for the ESA-Listed Species Considered in this Consultation.

Species ESU	Status	Critical Habitat <sup>8</sup>	Protective Regulations	Biological Information, Historical Population Trends
<b>Chinook salmon (<i>O. Tshawytscha</i>)</b>				
Snake River fall-run	T 4/22/92; 57 FR 14653 <sup>9</sup>	12/28/93; 58 FR 68543	7/10/00; 65 FR 42422	Waples <i>et al.</i> 1991b; Healey 1991
Snake River spring/summer-run	T 4/22/92; 57 FR 14653 <sup>2</sup>	10/25/99; 64 FR 57399 <sup>10</sup>	7/10/00; 65 FR 42422	Matthews and Waples 1991; Healey 1991
Lower Columbia River	T 3/24/99; 64 FR 14308		7/10/00; 65 FR 42422	Myers <i>et al.</i> 1998; Healey 1991
Upper Willamette River	T 3/24/99; 64 FR 14308		7/10/00; 65 FR 42422	Myers <i>et al.</i> 1998; Healey 1991
Upper Columbia River spring-run	E 3/27/99; 64 FR 14308		7/10/00; 65 FR 42422	Myers <i>et al.</i> 1998; Healey 1991
<b>Chum salmon (<i>O. keta</i>)</b>				
Columbia River	T 3/25/99; 64 FR 14508		7/10/00; 65 FR 42422	Johnson <i>et al.</i> 1997; Salo 1991
<b>Sockeye salmon (<i>O. nerka</i>)</b>				
Snake River	E 11/20/91; 56 FR 58619	12/28/93; 58 FR 68543	11/20/91; 56 FR 58619	Waples <i>et al.</i> 1991a; Burgner 1991
<b>Steelhead (<i>O. mykiss</i>)</b>				
Lower Columbia River	T 3/19/98; 63 FR 13347		7/10/00; 65 FR 42422	Busby <i>et al.</i> 1995; 1996
Middle Columbia River	T 3/25/99; 64 FR 14517		7/10/00; 65 FR 42422	Busby <i>et al.</i> 1995; 1996
Upper Columbia River	E 8/18/97; 62 FR 43937		7/10/00; 65 FR 42422	Busby <i>et al.</i> 1995; 1996
Upper Willamette River	T 3/25/99; 64 FR 14517		7/10/00; 65 FR 42422	Busby <i>et al.</i> 1995; 1996
Snake River Basin	T 8/18/97; 62 FR 43937		7/10/00; 65 FR 42422	Busby <i>et al.</i> 1995; 1996

<sup>8</sup> Critical habitat designations (excluding Snake River chinook and sockeye salmon) were vacated and remanded on May 7, 2002 by a Federal Court

<sup>9</sup> Also see 6/3/92; 57 FR 23458, correcting the original listing decision by refining ESU ranges.

<sup>10</sup> This corrects the original designation of 12/28/93 (58 FR 68543) by excluding areas above Napias Creek Falls, a naturally impassable barrier.